

# Parking Forum # 2

January 20, 2015



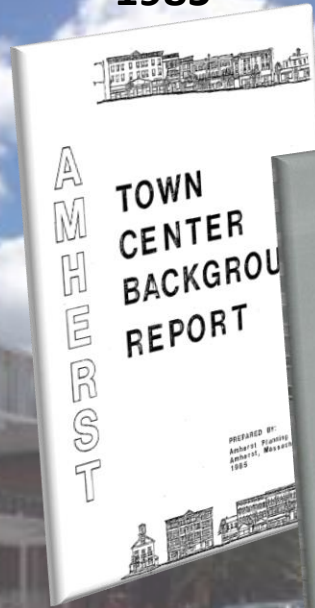


Amherst Municipal Integrated  
District Bylaw regulations Enforcement  
Broad Garage new agreements  
Meters rates Shared Permits  
Signs provide payment smartphone  
Cinema use Town technology feeding Boltwood  
Winter on street lot  
Downtown units Zoning Plan  
Center predictable developers  
ban meter facility private  
Master Dwelling Education  
concepts Restaurants

# parking

## management system

1985



1990



1996



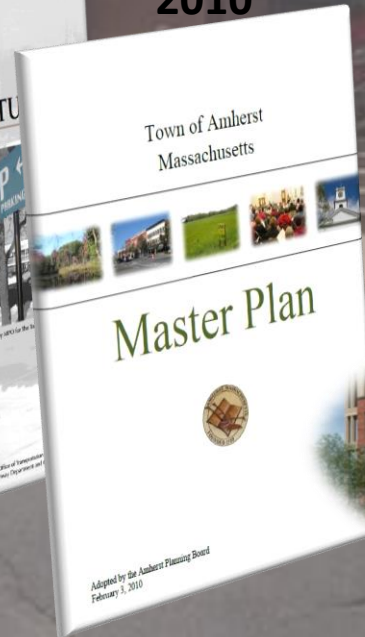
2000-2003



2008



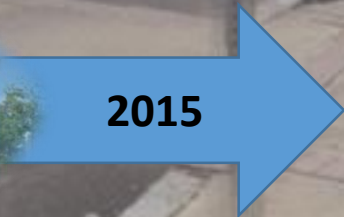
2010



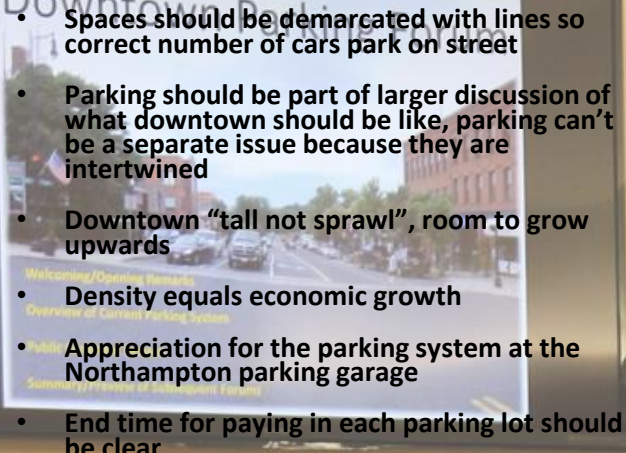
2013/2014



2015











<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking as an integrated system</li> <li>• One person or office within the Town should lead the parking process</li> <li>• Differential rates for places and times depending on desirability</li> <li>• “Meter feeding” by businesses is an issue</li> <li>• Need to better regulate and enforce meter feeding</li> <li>• Additional space in the Boltwood parking garage should be pursued</li> <li>• Parking should be predictable</li> <li>• Visitors who are unfamiliar with the town need to be able to find parking</li> <li>• People often need parking spaces for more than 3 hours</li> <li>• Appreciation for the Northampton parking garage system where you pay when you leave</li> <li>• Customers complain of lack of spaces—studies the town has commissioned may say there’s enough space, but spaces are not available, predictable, or easy to find</li> <li>• New downtown developments with lots of bedrooms but no parking could lead to crisis</li> <li>• Signage to the “CVS lot” should be more effective</li> <li>• Ability to waive parking requirements as part of project permitting process can be a problem</li> <li>• Parking should be built at the developer’s expense</li> <li>• Parking should be required for downtown residences in the Municipal Parking District</li> <li>• Lack of enforcement of the winter parking regulations leads to fewer spaces and narrower driving lanes</li> <li>• Make dataset on parking enforcement available on the parking forum website, because where there are many tickets could illuminate where there’s heavy demand</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spaces should be demarcated with lines so correct number of cars park on street</li> <li>• Parking should be part of larger discussion of what downtown should be like, parking can’t be a separate issue because they are intertwined</li> <li>• Downtown “tall not sprawl”, room to grow upwards</li> <li>• Density equals economic growth</li> <li>• Appreciation for the parking system at the Northampton parking garage</li> <li>• End time for paying in each parking lot should be clear</li> <li>• Parking permit system works well</li> <li>• Appreciation for Northampton parking garage whereas Amherst garage a failure because lots of money spent for few spaces</li> <li>• There is competition for handicap accessible spaces and any discussion on parking should include the elderly and handicapped</li> <li>• New developments could include underground parking garages</li> <li>• Support for growing Boltwood garage</li> <li>• Should look for technological fixes to connect open spaces to people needing spaces</li> <li>• The choice of two lots side-by-side behind CVS where one is pay and one is free means people choose the free side</li> <li>• Parking component of vibrant downtown, but stores, places, etc. are more important</li> <li>• Not enough spaces considering growth in number of seats at restaurants</li> <li>• New development takes spaces rather than increasing the number of spaces</li> <li>• Support for growing the Boltwood garage and using the CVS lot for a parking garage</li> <li>• Concern about the length of the parking forum process—why will the next meeting not be until January?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking is difficult for visitors to figure out</li> <li>• 5 hour meter spaces are not well-publicized</li> <li>• Whatever the parking system the focus should be clarity</li> <li>• Redistribution of town permitting spaces should be considered</li> <li>• There should be more dual use spaces: meters and permits</li> <li>• Boltwood is the more preferable location for a garage because already paid to make it buildable vertically</li> <li>• Town center is important as a community focal point</li> <li>• Amherst receives many visitors from neighboring towns that don’t have town centers</li> <li>• Parking management should have more citizen input, maybe it’s time to revive the Parking Commission</li> <li>• Finding spaces is difficult for newcomers, need better, more clear signage</li> <li>• Municipal Parking District can be in conflict with infill development and this should be worked on</li> <li>• Boltwood garage was insufficient at the time it was built</li> <li>• Inexpensive parking would attract long term campus parkers</li> <li>• Uniqueness of downtown important especially to visitors</li> <li>• Make bicycling an option by improving safety for cyclists</li> <li>• Clearer signage regarding the rules of the road for cyclists, pedestrians, and cars</li> <li>• Pedestrian-friendly downtown should be encouraged</li> <li>• Support for garage that doesn’t detract from feel of town</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impressed by car-free downtowns and pedestrian boulevards</li> <li>• Support for Municipal Parking District, but need more publicly funded parking options to accompany the MPD</li> <li>• Density is important to preserve open space</li> <li>• Support for improving clarity of parking signage</li> <li>• Parallel parking may not be best use of space, in Northampton they have diagonal parking spaces which can help narrow the road and slow traffic</li> <li>• Safety of roads to help cyclists, like filling potholes</li> <li>• Improving public transit to decrease cars</li> <li>• Allowing rental-adjacent parcels to rent parking space</li> <li>• Not providing parking at new developments decreases livability of surrounding neighborhoods</li> <li>• Missing aspect of Municipal Parking District and ability to waive parking is that development beyond certain point should have to pay for parking</li> <li>• Comparison to Northampton isn’t apt because a lot more commercial space there</li> <li>• New development could negatively impact nearby private lots</li> <li>• Events cause problems with parking because locals can’t get spaces and there’s no such thing as “secret spaces”</li> <li>• Building up Boltwood won’t add enough space</li> <li>• One main thoroughfare in town means pedestrian boulevards are not feasible in Amherst</li> <li>• Should use technology to help with parking</li> <li>• Private lots should be made public</li> </ul>
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Metering/Rates	New Parking Supply	Signs/Education	Review/change regulations	Enforcement/Management	General/Broad concepts
					
Create different rates depending on location	Review/consider whether a new parking facility is needed; whether developers should provide parking	Parking is hard for visitors to find	Review/revise Municipal Parking District	Review/consider management of private lots	Existing data from 2008 may be outdated
Deter/prohibit meter feeding	Review/consider creation of a new parking facility	Signs for some public and private lots are hard to find and confusing	Review/revise Town Center Permit system	Re-establish the Parking Commission	What kind of downtown do we want?
Use new technology/smart phone app	Review/consider adding to <u>Boltwood Garage</u>	Promote use of Town Center Permit spots after 5:00 p.m.	Review/revise winter parking ban	Create a designated parking official	Consider parking is an integrated system
Make payment more predictable/pay when leaving	Review/consider expanding Town Center Permit areas	Better identify long-term and short term parking meters	Review/revise current on-street parking regulations	Lack of enforcement of winter parking ban	Parking is important to success of downtown



# ***\*NEW\**** Grant Opportunity

## *Parking Demand Management Plan*



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HOUSING &  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Deval L. Patrick, Governor ♦ Gregory Bialecki, Secretary

### **NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

#### **PARKING DEMAND MANAGEMENT PLANS (PDMP)**

**December 2014**

#### **I. PROGRAM GOALS**

The immediate goal of funding Parking Demand Management Plans (PDMPs) is to support municipalities that are growing and require use of best practices that manage demand through improved utilization of supply and through demand-pricing mechanisms. The growth may be due to residential, commercial or industrial development, and may be increasing the parking needs of employees, business customers or tourists. There is a growing consensus in the transportation and parking management community that responding to increased demand for parking primarily by increasing supply is often a costly and counterproductive response. There is increasing interest in implementing measures that manage demand through improved utilization of supply and through demand-pricing mechanisms.

# ***\*NEW\**** Grant Opportunity

## *Parking Demand Management Plan*

### **Collection of information on the existing parking management system:**

Compiling data on the number of residents and visitors (including employees, customers and tourists)

Inventory of the number of parking spaces available on-street and off-street in privately and publicly-owned locations

Utilization of existing supply at different times of the days and week

### **Assessment of parking demand management options or recommendation in light of national best practices**

Preparing presentations and reports as needed

### **Assist during the process of considering and adopting a PDMP or changes in parking management**

Organizing, conducting or participating in public meetings

Working with stakeholders

### **Assist in launch of implementation of any adopted plan or changes in parking management**

Preparing a detailed implementation plan

Assist in identifying funding sources, reviewing or drafting zoning ordinances



# *\*NEW\** Transportation Plan

*Town-wide transportation plan underway*

- Timeline
  - Draft Plan in February
  - Final Plan in March/April
- Relevance to parking downtown will be general
- Both initiatives will interact



**AMHERST TRANSPORTATION PLAN:  
EXISTING CONDITIONS**

**DRAFT**



# Metering/Rates

*Create different rates depending on location*

*Demand management/rates*

*Mid term; Select Board, BID/Chamber, DPW, others*

*Possible grant opportunity*



2010 Master Plan

## STRATEGIES

**T.5.A Make changes in parking policies to organize the public parking supply more efficiently.**

- Restructure metered parking into zones with a tiered fee structure such that the most convenient parking is the most short-term and more expensive than areas further away from downtown.

# Metering/Rates

*Various projects*

*Mid/Long term; DPW & Planning Department*



Better identify meters/color code based on time (Short Term/Select Board; DPW)

Make payment more predictable (Mid Term/Select Board, others) possible grant opportunity

Incorporate smart technology/app's; use Town wifi (Long Term/ Town-wide effort)

Deter/prohibit meter feeding (Long Term, Select Board, business owners, others)



# Signs/Education

*Parking is hard to find*

*New downtown parking signs*

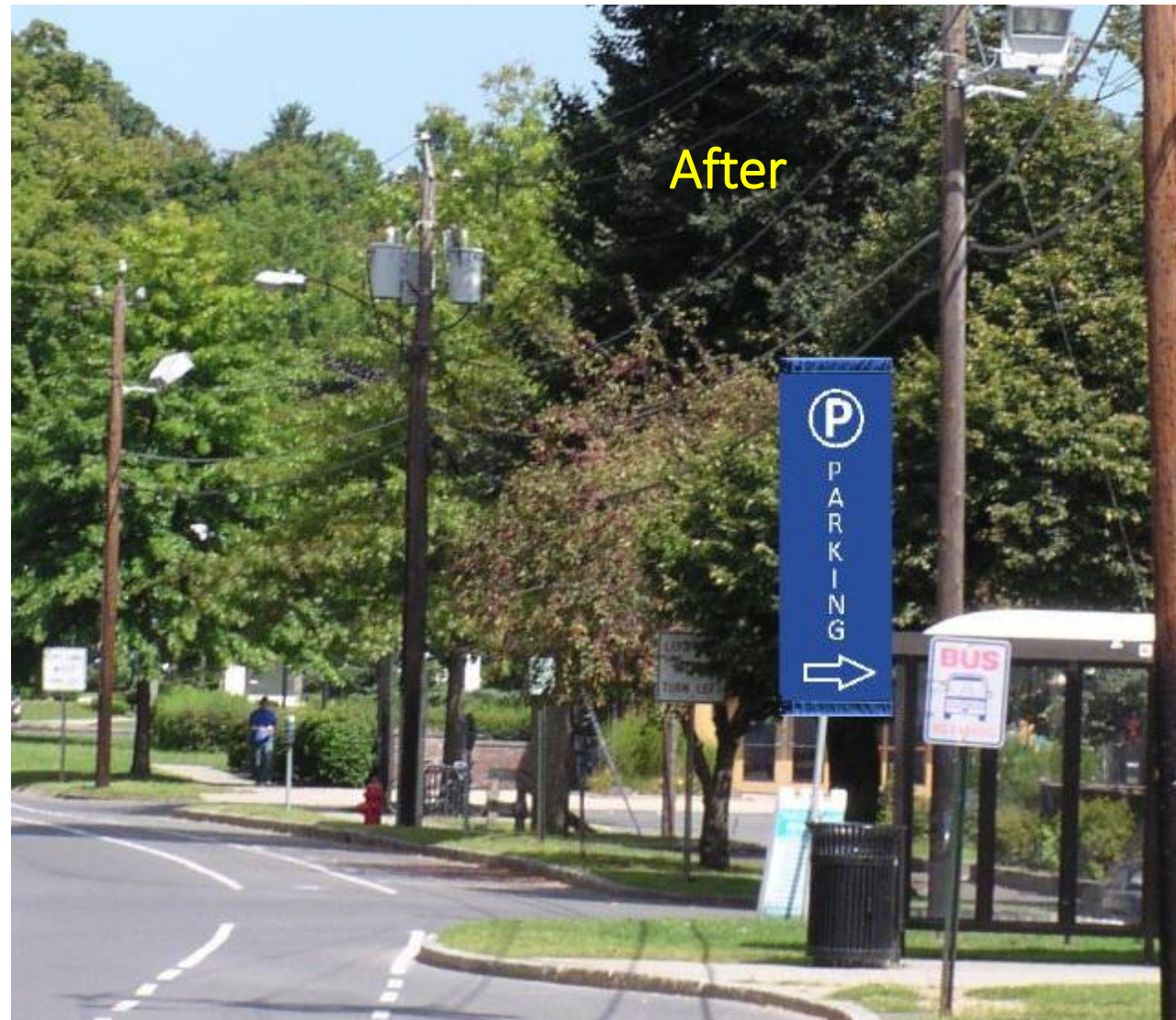
*Project underway*

*Short term; DPW & Planning Department*

Before



After





# Signs/Education

*Parking is hard to find*

*New downtown parking signs*

*Project underway*

*Short term; DPW & Planning Department*





# Signs/Education

*Parking is hard to find*



*New downtown parking signs*

*Project underway*

*Short term; DPW & Planning Department*





# Signs/Education

*Parking is hard to find*

*New downtown parking signs*

*Project underway*

*Short term; DPW & Planning Department*





# Signs/Education

## Wayfinding signs

- Downtown Technical Assistance Grant



## 2015 **Downtown Technical Assistance Application Cover Sheet**

### *Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Program*

#### •Way finding/Branding:

Requests for assistance may address any aspect of developing a public way finding system and the creation of a distinguishable image or logo that carries through the various streetscape elements, including but not limited to: creation of public design elements that will be used throughout the downtown, way finding plan, cost analysis for implementation, and branding of a downtown through historic elements.

*Wayfinding and community branding*

*Grant application submitted*

*Mid term; Planning Department, BID/Chamber, Select Board, others*



### **A SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING STRATEGY FOR THE CONCORD CENTER CULTURAL DISTRICT**



March 2014



# Signs/Education

## *Special Event Parking*

*Special Event Parking*  
*Short term; BID/Chamber, Select Board, Police,*  
*others*

Provide coordinated shared parking and sign program for special events such as Merry Maple and Block Party



### **G. OVERFLOW PARKING SIGNS**

It is recommended that the Town of Amherst implement signage that directs patrons to permit parking areas during free parking times, on weekends and during special events. Suggested overflow permit parking areas include Lots 84, 85, 86 and 87 located on the southeastern section of the study area. Additional Lots include 11, 28, and 50 located in the northern half of the study area. Permit parking on these permit Lot numbers never exceeds a 50% utilization rate throughout the entire day. Signage directing traffic to these under-utilized areas will alleviate congestion, during the weekends and after 5:00 P.M., when permit parking is available to the general public. The Town of Amherst should also consider requesting permission to utilize private Lot 81 and private Lot 83 as the designated overflow parking lots during special events.



# Signs/Education

*Public awareness/promotion*

*Public awareness/promotion*

*Mid term; Select Board, BID/Chamber, others*

Identify ways to promote Town Center Permit parking after 5:00 p.m. (leaflet upon application; advertised by businesses)



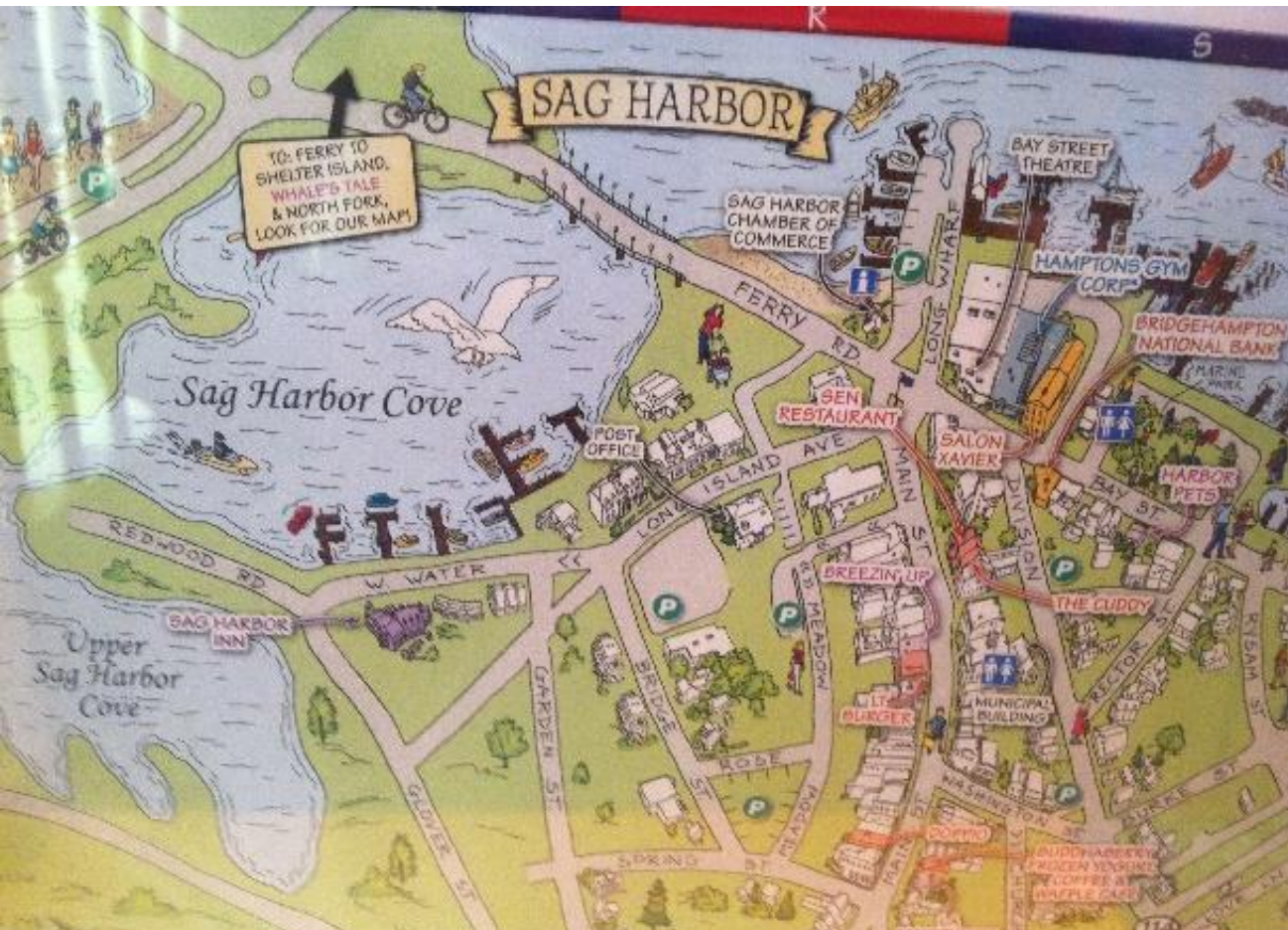
## **D. PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

It is recommended that the Town of Amherst develop additional information to supplement the existing parking maps and policies available on the Town of Amherst webpage. This could include information on preferred public parking areas, the dangers of illegally parking in private parking areas and identify overflow parking areas. The use of the local media should also be considered to alert the public of changes to parking in the downtown area.

# Signs/Education

*Public awareness/promotion*

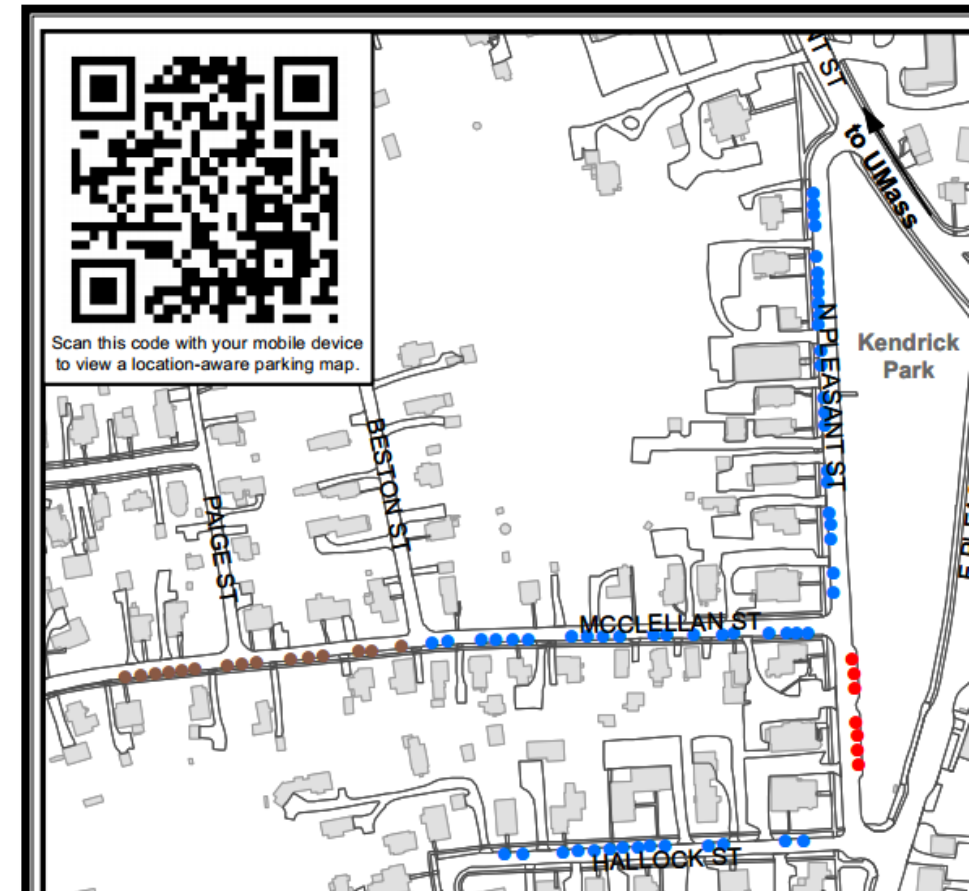
Commission an artist to prepare a welcome to Amherst map; will help identify public parking



*Public awareness/promotion*

*Mid term; Select Board, BID/Chamber, others*

Promote the QR code option for Smartphone





# Signs/Education

*Improve private/public lot signs*

Review signs for:

CVS & Town Lot

Pray Street

Private lots (Merchantile)

*Public awareness/promotion*

*Public/private lot sign improvements*

*Mid term; Select Board, BID/Chamber, others*





# Regulations

## *Zoning Bylaw*

Primary policy question is whether a change is necessary

- Planning process should be deliberative, proactive (not reactionary), and based on data
- Review must consider history and intent of Municipal Parking District

Determine if new requirements for residential uses downtown should be established

- Some ratio of # of spaces per unit
- Payment in lieu of program
- Potential thresholds for applicability

Public process required

*Review Municipal Parking District  
Short term; Planning Board, BID/Chamber, others*





# Regulations

## *Zoning Bylaw*

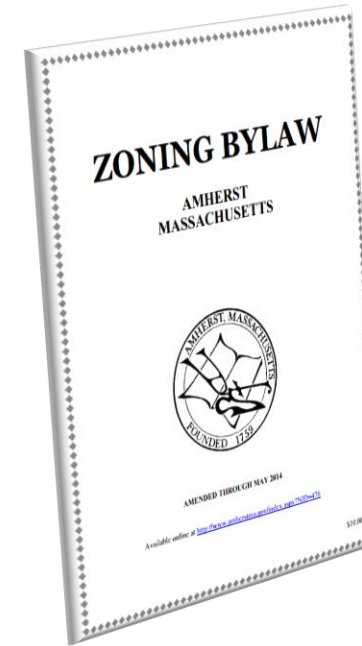
### Permitting requirements for private parking facilities

- Currently requires SPR for public but SP for private

### Shared/Lease parking provisions (Short Term; Planning Board; requires property owners support)

- Goal is to ensure zoning enables it
- Parking Use Agreements
- Include UMass as stakeholder

*Various  
Short/mid term; Planning Board, BID/Chamber,  
others*



### **H. PARKING USE AGREEMENTS**

The Town of Amherst is encouraged to approach the owners of the surrounding underutilized privately owned parking lots to try and develop an agreement to allow for additional public parking. A typical agreement would indicate the location and number of parking spaces available for public use. In return, the Town could agree to provide some service such as routine general maintenance for these areas. The main advantage of an official parking agreement would be the ability to increase parking enforcement, have designated overflow parking areas to direct vehicles, and reduce illegal parking in private lots by providing additional public parking convenient to local business.

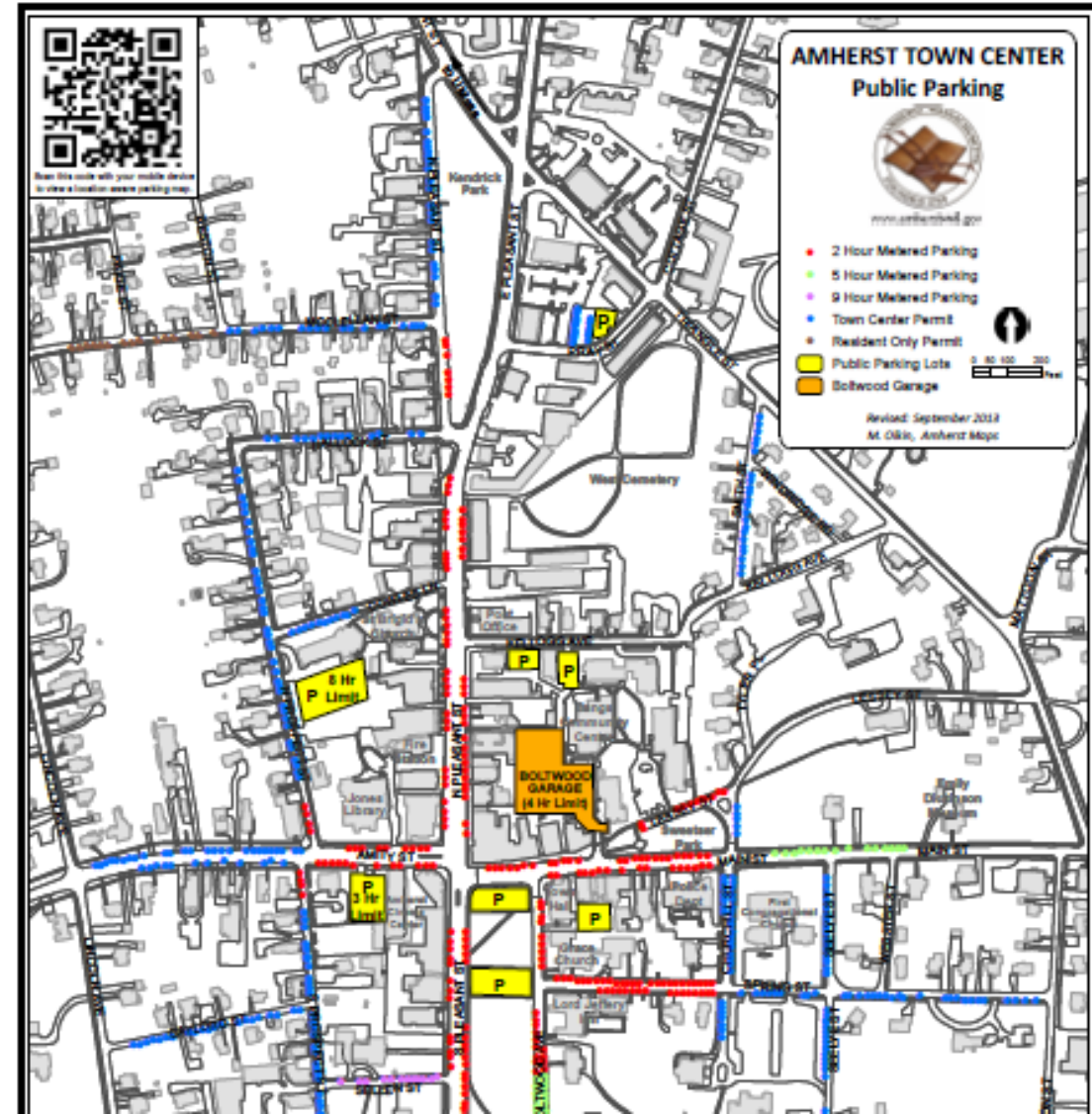


# Regulations

## Town Center Permits

*Town Center Permits, various  
Short/mid term; Select Board, Planning  
Department, DPW, others*

- Explore possible areas of expansion (existing paved areas, etc); need to provide downtown and periphery locations
- Find ways to further encourage use/eliminate meter feeding
- Create controls on unregulated streets





# Regulations

## *Town Center Permits*

### ***Main Street***

- Believe the 5 hour meters are underutilized.
- Consider adding to Town Center Permit system; or, dual meter and Town Center Permit.
- Could allow for the removal of parking on Webster (if desirable)

*Town Center Permits, possible expansion  
Short/mid term; Select Board, Planning  
Department, DPW, others*





# Regulations

## *Town Center Permits*

*Town Center Permits, possible expansion  
Short/mid term; Select Board, Planning  
Department, DPW, others*

### ***Sellen Street***

- Believe the 9 hour meters are underutilized.
- Consider adding to Town Center Permit system; or, dual meter and Town Center Permit.



### ***Boltwood Avenue***

- Believe the 5 hour meters are underutilized.
- Consider adding to Town Center Permit system; or, dual meter and Town Center Permit.



### ***CVS public lot***

- Consider adding underutilized area to Town Center Permit system; or, dual meter and Town Center Permit.





# Regulations

## *Town Center Permits*

### ***Lincoln Avenue (Near Amity)***

Consider adding to Town Center Permit system

Or

Review on-street parking regulations to remove/restrict parking

*Town Center Permits, possible expansion  
Short/mid term; Select Board, Planning  
Department, DPW, others*





# Regulations

## *Town Center Permits*

*Town Center Permits, possible expansion  
Short/mid term; Select Board, Planning  
Department, DPW, others*

### ***Dickinson Street***

- Expanded business growth in area
- Consider adding to Town Center Permit system





# Regulations

## *Town Center Permits*

*Town Center Permits, various  
Short/mid term; Select Board, Planning  
Department, DPW, others*

### Striping spaces

- Maximize use; organize parking



### Winter snow removal

- Review policy

### Campus edge (Allen; Nutting)

- Review use/efficacy



# Regulations

## *Winter Parking Ban*

*Parking Rules and Orders, winter parking ban  
Mid/Long term; Select Board, Planning  
Department, DPW, others*

Short/Mid term opportunities:

Possibility for pilot program next winter

- Review and identify some potential streets/locations
- Outline a program and timeline
- Consider implementation





# Regulations

## *Winter Parking Ban*

*Parking Rules and Orders, winter parking ban  
Mid/Long term; Select Board, Planning  
Department, DPW, others*

### Mid/Long term opportunities:

- Goal to make system more suitable for residential use
- Review what other communities do
- Consider opposite side regulations
- Consider other options for winter parking overnight

(All are potential grant opportunities)



# Regulations

*Off-street parking*

*Review use of periphery streets  
Mid/Long term; Select Board, Planning  
Department, DPW, Police, others*

## Review/revise current on-street regulations

- Consider evaluation of periphery streets beyond MPD and TCP:
  - Lincoln Avenue
  - Taylor Street
  - High Street
  - Brigham St
  - Others?
- Review overnight parking restriction





# New parking facility

## *Community discussion*

### **History...**

Must complete comprehensive review of history:

1985 – Town Center study/ Municipal Parking District

1989/1990 – Task force/facilities study

1997 – Boltwood process

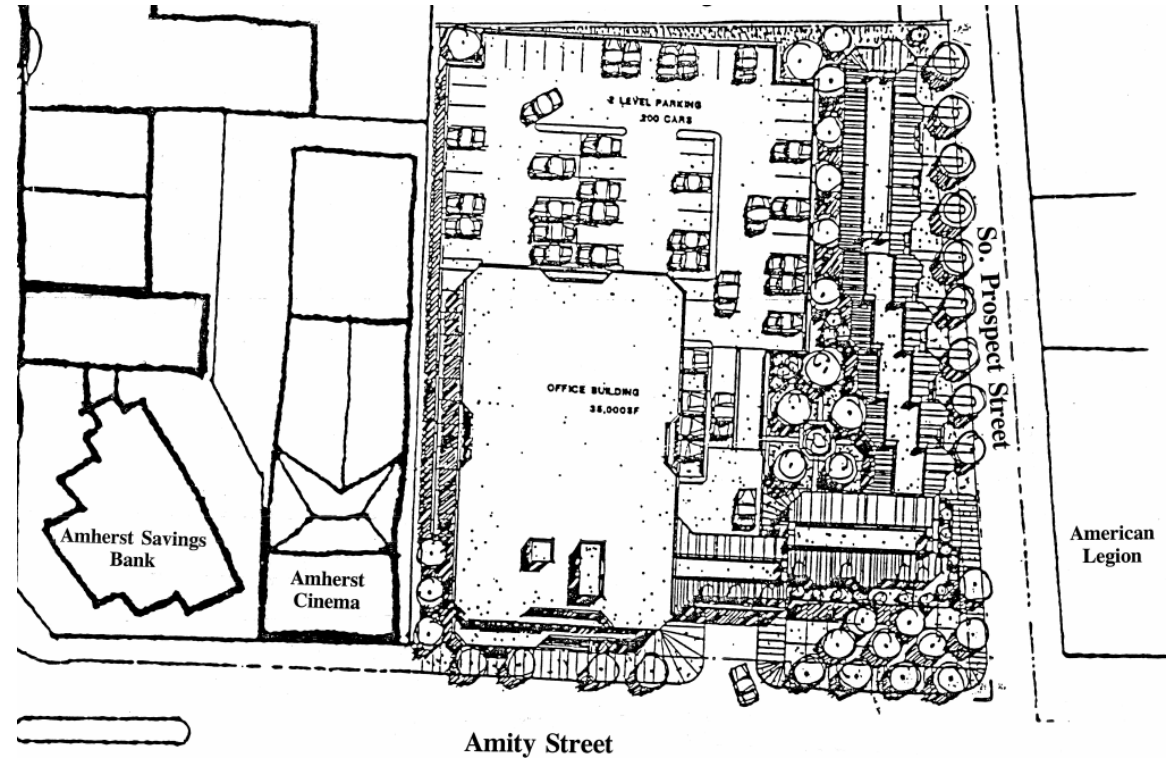
2003 – Garage opened

2008 – PVPC study

2010 – Master Plan

2015 – Today...

*Review/consider new parking facility  
Long term; Select Board, Planning Board,  
Planning Department, DPW, residents, business  
owners, BID/Chamber, others*



# New parking facility

*Community discussion*

*Review/consider new parking facility  
Long term; Select Board, Planning Board,  
Planning Department, DPW, residents, business  
owners, BID/Chamber, others*

## **Do we need it?**

Long term goal to determine need:

Obtain new data

- No data on number of employees vs. number who use permits
- Limited data on number of dwelling units downtown; what is our capacity

Account for growth of businesses and residential units

- Amherst Cinema
- Jones Library
- New residential development

Grant opportunity may provide data

Transportation Plan may inform needs assessment

May require re-establishing Parking Commission/Committee/Task Force

## Master Plan

**T.5.B Evaluate existing downtown public and private parking areas for reorganization, management, enhancement, or potential redevelopment as multi-modal facilities, preferably in concert with private mixed-used redevelopment of adjacent streetfront areas.**

Areas to include in this evaluation include, but are not limited to, the Boltwood Walk parking garage, CVS lot, Amity Street lot, parking sites at the north end of downtown, in the interior of the East Pleasant/Triangle/Pray Street block, and the Amherst College alumni parking lot south of Spring Street.



# New parking facility

*Community discussion*

*Review/consider new parking facility  
Long term; Select Board, Planning Board,  
Planning Department, DPW, residents, business  
owners, BID/Chamber, others*

## Where?

Long term goal to determine potential locations

- Second level on Boltwood
- CVS lot
- Other locations?
  - Amity Street
  - Amherst College Alumni Lot

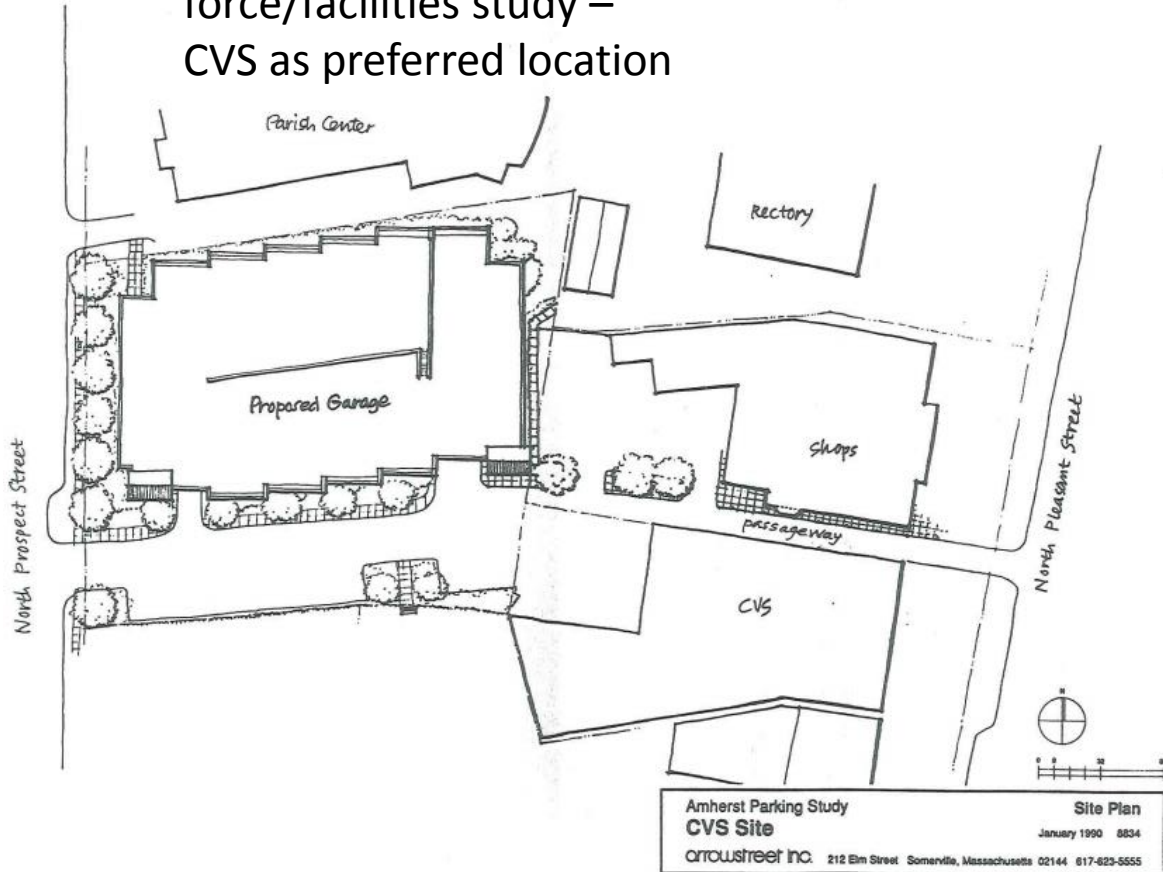


# New parking facility

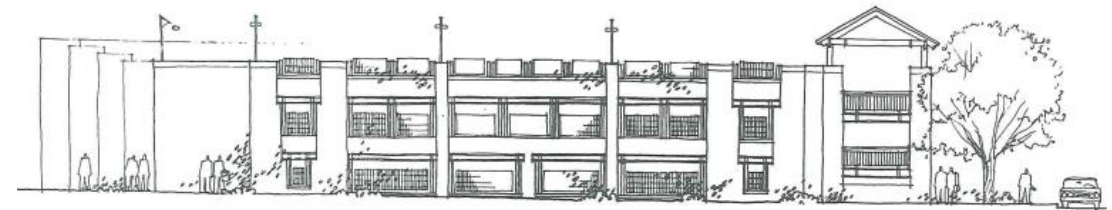
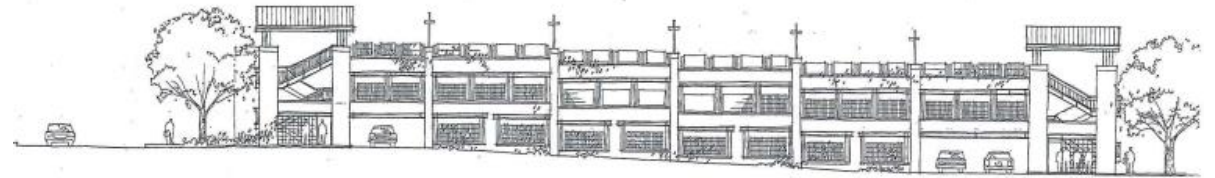
*Community discussion*

## History....

1989/1990 – Task  
force/facilities study –  
CVS as preferred location



*Review/consider new parking facility  
Long term; Select Board, Planning Board,  
Planning Department, DPW, residents, business  
owners, BID/Chamber, others*





# General/broad concepts

## Community discussion

### What kind of downtown do we want?

(Master Plan excerpts)

Table 1.1 Planning Amherst Together – Timeline of Major Activities

Activity (* signifies a public involvement activity)	Timeframe
<b>Public Idea Gathering Meetings *</b> - Several large public brainstorming sessions to identify community needs, concerns, and desires.	Fall 2006
<b>Technical Research, Drafting of Existing Conditions and Trends Report</b> – Staff and consultant data-gathering.	Summer/Fall 2006
<b>Work Group Workshops *</b> - Groups of citizens assigned to focus on specific aspects of the community in open sessions.	Winter/Spring 2007
<b>Community Choices *</b> - Priority setting meetings.	March 2007
<b>Community Survey *</b> - A professionally-conducted survey of community preferences.	Summer 2007
<b>Develop Draft Master Plan</b>	Summer 2007
<b>Last Call*</b> - Mailing to Town Meeting members	Aug./Sept. 2007
<b>Open House *</b> - Review of the initial draft master plan.	October 2007
<b>Revise and Finalize Master Plan</b> – Work by a CPC subcommittee.	November 2007 – Nov. 2008
<b>Planning Board Review and Adoption*</b>	Nov. 2008 – Feb. 3, 2010

#### Encourage vitality in the downtown and village centers.

Amherst’s downtown and village centers should be a focus for the community’s economic life, cultural vigor, and social activity.

Vitality in these areas can be pursued through a variety of initiatives, including encouraging additional housing development, economic investment, expansion of cultural facilities, promotion of a mix of uses, and improvements to the public realm (parks, streetscapes, and public squares). These initiatives will lead to a more walkable community, allow for more day-to-day interactions among residents, and attract more visitors to the community while enhancing Amherst’s growing tourism industry.

**Land Use:** A sustainable, attractive town with a vital downtown and viable mixed-use village centers well connected to livable and diverse neighborhoods and campuses, and interwoven with protected open space, natural resources, and active farmland.

- Preferentially direct future development to existing built-up areas.
- Create vital downtown and village centers (areas of mixed use, including retail, commercial, and residential elements) that are walkable, attractive and efficient.
- Revise the zoning code to promote infill development in strategic locations.
- Increase the opportunity for infill development and the location of housing development near services.
- Support sustainable growth of existing businesses and attract new ones while protecting environmental values.
- Support “relocalization” of the Amherst economy.
- Promote downtown as a key cultural, commercial and entertainment center of Amherst.
- Within the context of community transportation demand management planning, provide for adequate parking to support existing and desired new development in the downtown and elsewhere.

# General/broad concepts

## *Community discussion*

What kind of downtown do we want?

- New development downtown

2010 census shows 9,711 dwelling units in Town

Preliminary numbers (based on Rental Permits) show that ~328 units currently in downtown (MPD) = 3.4%

- Sustainability
- Consideration of new trends (Zipcar, ride share, etc.)
- Anticipate future need



# Enforcement/management of existing parking

*Public & Private*

*Enforcement/Management  
Mid/Long term; Select Board, Planning Board,  
Planning Department, DPW, residents, property  
owners, BID/Chamber, others*

- Review enforcement of private lots
- Re-establish parking commission or task force
- Actively enforce winter parking ban and other regulations



# Next steps

- Continued public input/feedback
- Possible grant opportunity to carry forward momentum
- Final forum (March?) to review implementation steps/timelines
- Preparation of Report of findings